

IDAHO EMPLOYMENT

A monthly newsletter of the Idaho Department of Labor



Volume 15.10

November 2003 Issue/September 2003 Data

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State Overview

IDAHO'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DECREASES TO 5.5 PERCENT

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for September 2003 was 5.5 percent, down one-tenth of a percentage point from August. Idaho's September unemployment rate is the same as experienced one year ago. The current unemployment rate remains below the national rate of 6.1 percent, which was unchanged from August.

Idaho *Total Employment* in September increased from August by 1,922 to 648,900 individuals. This is the first month-over-month increase in the number of workers since May of this year. At the same time the number of unemployed persons in Idaho decreased by 1,100 to 37,486.

These numbers resulted in an 822-person increase in Idaho's *Civilian Labor Force* to 686,186 individuals. This is the first month-over-month increase in the *Civilian Labor Force* since March of this year. The current labor force mirrors the September 2002 labor force. In September 2002, the *Civilian Labor Force* was 686,186, the number of persons working was 649,000, the number of persons unemployed was 37,500, and the unemployment rate was 5.5 percent.

COUNTY AND AREA LABOR FORCE

The September seasonal adjusted unemployment rates of Idaho's 44 counties ranged from a high of 13.1 per cent to a low of 1.1 percent. *September Labor Force numbers for each Idaho county is listed on State Table 1, page 3.*

There were four Idaho counties that experienced double-digit unemployment rates in September. Adams County had the highest unemployment rate at 13.1 percent in September, down from 15.2 in August, but up from 12.6 percent in September 2002. Shoshone County's rate of 12.1 percent was down from 16.0 percent in August, but up from 10.0 percent in September 2002. Washington County's rate was 11.7 percent, down from 12.8 percent in August and up from 9.2 percent in September 2002. Payette County had an unemployment rate of 11.2 percent, up from 11.0 percent in August and from 9.9 percent in September 2002. None of these counties has a labor force that exceeds 9,500 people, which is about 1.4 percent of the state's labor force, so a change in labor force status of just a few people, combined with seasonal adjustment expectations, can lead to significant unemployment rate changes within these counties without having much of an impact on the state's unemployment rate. The sum of the four counties' labor forces is about 3.2 percent, so, again, the high unemployment rates collectively have a small affect on the statewide rate.

Five counties had an unemployment rate at or below 3.0 percent in September. Bonneville County is forecast to have an unemployment rate of 3.0 percent, down from 3.3 percent in August and 3.2 percent in September 2002. Lewis County is forecast to experience 2.9 percent unemployment in

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September 2003 compared to 3.7 percent in August and 8.9 percent in September 2002. Oneida County's rate of 2.9 percent is unchanged from August, but is down from 3.7 percent in September 2002. Jefferson County is forecast to have an unemployment rate of 2.9 percent, down from 3.1 percent in August, but up from 2.8 percent in September 2002. The sum of these counties' labor forces is about 4.2 percent of the state's total so, like the high unemployment counties, these low unemployment counties do not have a great affect on the statewide unemployment rate.

The state has eight Labor Market Areas (LMAs). Two are currently designated as Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) for employment statistical purposes. All but the Pocatello City MSA (Bannock County) are multi-county areas, and the Seaport LMA includes Asotin County, Washington. Two North Idaho LMAs usually have the highest unemployment rates among the areas and September was no exception. The Idaho-Lewis LMA again shows the highest unemployment rate at 8.3 percent followed by the Panhandle LMA at 8.0 percent. (It might seem ironic that Lewis County, which is part of the LMA with the highest unemployment rate, is one of the five Idaho counties that experienced a September unemployment rate of 3.0 percent or lower.) The state's largest area, the Boise City MSA, had a month-over-month increase in employment and a decrease in unemployment that led to the decline in the area's unemployment rate from 5.5 percent in August to 5.3 percent in September.

NONFARM PAYROLL JOBS

There were 7,100 *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* added to Idaho's economy in September from August, representing a 1.2 percent increase. It also was the largest month-over-month job gain in 2003. While *Goods-Producing Industries* added 600 jobs, *Service-Providing Industries* added more than ten times that number. The total job growth from September 2003 to September 2002—6,900—was nearly the same as the month-over-month gain, but the distribution of those jobs looks different. *Goods-Producing Industries* lost 1,300 jobs from last year while the *Service-Providing Industries* added 8,200 jobs.

Wildfire conditions remained at an extreme or very high level throughout September. Summer weather was the norm statewide with above average temperatures and little or no precipitation. These conditions continued to curtail logging, some construction, and perhaps some recreational activities due to restrictions placed upon use of power equipment and burning. While job losses were most likely minor due to the restrictions, other factors such as high gasoline prices occurred at peak times and dampened the opportunity for job gains. Yet Idaho escaped the large, costly fires that took place in the Pacific and Intermountain West during most of the summer.

Although *Construction* experienced its first jobs decline in 2003 by losing 300 jobs from August to September, it was a marginal loss of 0.7 percent. Some road repair or heavy construction projects were completed, and fewer specialty contractor jobs were available. The *Construction* industry remains strong and the September job level of 40,900 was 1,500, or 3.8 percent, more than in September 2002.

There was no change in the job count for *Wood Product Manufacturing* from August to September 2003 and only a small loss of 300 jobs occurred from September 2002. Although the year-over-year loss represents a 3.9 percent decline in jobs—primarily in sawmills—employment has been fairly stable during 2003 with a monthly total

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IDAHO EMPLOYMENT is produced by the Idaho Department of Labor which is funded at least in part by federal grants from the United States Department of Labor. Costs associated with this specific publication are available by contacting the Idaho Department of Labor. Questions and comments can be directed to Public Affairs by phoning (208) 332-3570, ext. 3220, or by e-mail to:

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of approximately 7,400 jobs.

Idaho's *Computer & Electronic Products Manufacturing* industry experienced another month of stable employment. This industry's estimated job level has remained at 16,000 since March 2003. The year-over-year loss of 1,800 jobs was due to major layoffs that occurred late last year, and in January and February of this year.

There were 500 more jobs in *Food Manufacturing* during September than in August. Some of the increase was the normal seasonal processing of the fall harvest, but this year the sugar beet campaign began earlier than usual. Year-over-year job declines occurred, however, due to layoffs experienced in the potato processing industry. That layoff number increased by about 300 in late October as the last production workers in a soon-to-be-closed potato processing plant were laid off. A meat packing plant in Nampa (30+ jobs) also is closing, however the numbers representing those closures will not appear until the November data is released. Check the iLMI website at www.jobservice.ws for the monthly news release of unemployment numbers, usually released the first Friday of each month.

The *Printing & Related Support Activities* industry receives very little comment in this newsletter. While it is a rather small industry, several firms have a significant presence in their local communities. Moore North American plant in Jerome, a form printing business, has announced it is closing and began laying off in October. More than 100 workers will lose their jobs.

Almost all of the *Service-Providing Industries* had month-over-month job gains from August to September. The few industries that lost jobs incurred minimal losses of about 100. The industries that gained jobs were spread throughout the *Service-Providing Industries*, thereby signaling breadth to Idaho's recovery from its economic slowdown of the last 19 to 24 months.

The one exception to minimal monthly job losses was the *Leisure & Hospitality* industry, which experienced a loss of 1,500 jobs month-over-month. September is the first of several transition months between summer and winter outdoor activities, otherwise known as "slack." So much of the job loss is seasonal. Several of Idaho's destination resorts, such as Sun Valley and The Coeur d'Alene Resort, attempt to attract business meetings and conventions during slack time and this mitigates even deeper declines in this seasonal industry.

Analysts are watching the job count in *Scientific Research & Development* in regards to the largest center of this activity in Idaho—the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL). The prime

State Table 1: September 2003 Labor Force (preliminary)

Seasonally Adjusted	Labor Force	Unemp.	% Unemp.	Total Emp.
Seaport LMA	35,806	1,777	5.0	34,029
Nez Perce County	23,425	921	3.9	22,505
Asotin County, WA	12,380	857	6.9	11,524
Boise City MSA	244,734	13,069	5.3	231,665
Ada County	175,409	8,012	4.6	167,397
Canyon County	69,325	5,056	7.3	64,268
Pocatello City MSA*	41,555	2,177	5.2	39,377
Bonneville LMA	81,063	2,695	3.3	78,368
Bingham County	22,049	876	4.0	21,173
Bonneville County	47,390	1,452	3.1	45,938
Butte County	1,539	74	4.8	1,465
Jefferson County	10,085	293	2.9	9,792
Cassia-Minidoka LMA	20,010	1,349	6.7	18,661
Cassia County	10,083	641	6.4	9,442
Minidoka County	9,928	708	7.1	9,219
Idaho-Lewis LMA	8,331	692	8.3	7,639
Idaho County	6,862	648	9.4	6,214
Lewis County	1,469	43	2.9	1,426
Panhandle LMA	93,028	7,430	8.0	85,598
Benewah County	4,221	359	8.5	3,862
Bonner County	17,942	1,452	8.1	16,490
Boundary County	4,432	368	8.3	4,064
Kootenai County	59,919	4,463	7.4	55,456
Shoshone County	6,515	788	12.1	5,727
Magic Valley LMA	53,817	2,286	4.2	51,531
Gooding County	7,514	267	3.6	7,246
Jerome County	10,065	489	4.9	9,576
Twin Falls County	36,239	1,530	4.2	34,709
Adams County	1,874	245	13.1	1,630
Bear Lake County	3,061	134	4.4	2,926
Blaine County	12,627	559	4.4	12,068
Boise County	2,692	198	7.4	2,494
Camas County	466	37	8.0	428
Caribou County	3,119	220	7.1	2,899
Clark County	460	23	5.0	437
Clearwater County	3,720	362	9.7	3,357
Custer County	2,250	133	5.9	2,117
Elmore County	9,805	677	6.9	9,129
Franklin County	5,476	168	3.1	5,308
Fremont County	4,598	176	3.8	4,423
Gem County	6,206	460	7.4	5,745
Latah County	16,457	575	3.5	15,882
Lemhi County	3,816	235	6.2	3,580
Lincoln County	2,208	112	5.1	2,096
Madison County	11,259	129	1.1	11,129
Oneida County	1,732	52	3.0	1,680
Owyhee County	4,241	101	2.4	4,139
Payette County	9,405	1,049	11.2	8,355
Power County	3,019	273	9.0	2,746
Teton County	3,740	151	4.0	3,590
Valley County	3,999	315	7.9	3,684
Washington County	4,109	481	11.7	3,627
State of Idaho	686,186	37,486	5.5	648,700
Idaho Cities				
Boise	117,462	5,193	4.4	112,270
Coeur d'Alene	21,176	1,231	5.8	19,944
Idaho Falls	29,507	948	3.2	28,559
Lewiston	19,883	702	3.5	19,181
Nampa	21,256	1,713	8.1	19,544
Pocatello	29,359	1,552	5.3	27,807
Twin Falls	18,998	869	4.6	18,129

* Pocatello MSA includes all of Bannock County.

contractor for this scientific research center in Butte and Bonneville Counties recently announced a major reorganization, and 200 persons are expected to be laid off as a result. Facility employment is expected to total about 7,300 after the layoffs. INEEL was established as a major nuclear reactor test site, but over the years its mission has changed to its current primary missions of nuclear waste clean-up technologies and processing, as well as research into development of other nuclear and materials applications. Employment at the site peaked at nearly 13,000 in 1992.

State & Local Government Education employment increased by a combined 5,000 jobs in September over August. Schools began their fall sessions, and hiring of administrative support and student staff was completed. However the total number of jobs in this education sector was 2,500 fewer than the year before. Budget constraints led to the reduced hiring.

AGRICULTURE

Above average temperatures and little precipitation continued through early September. The temperature turned cooler mid-month and then returned to very warm temperatures. This meant that the harvest of potatoes, sugar beets, and fall fruits, as well as the last cutting of hay, were early. Some crops were ready well ahead of the five-year average harvest dates. Field workers stopped irrigation and crop maintenance work in favor of field harvest work, sorting produce, and driving equipment and transport trucks.

Mid-September prices paid to Idaho farmers were higher than the August prices for alfalfa hay, dry

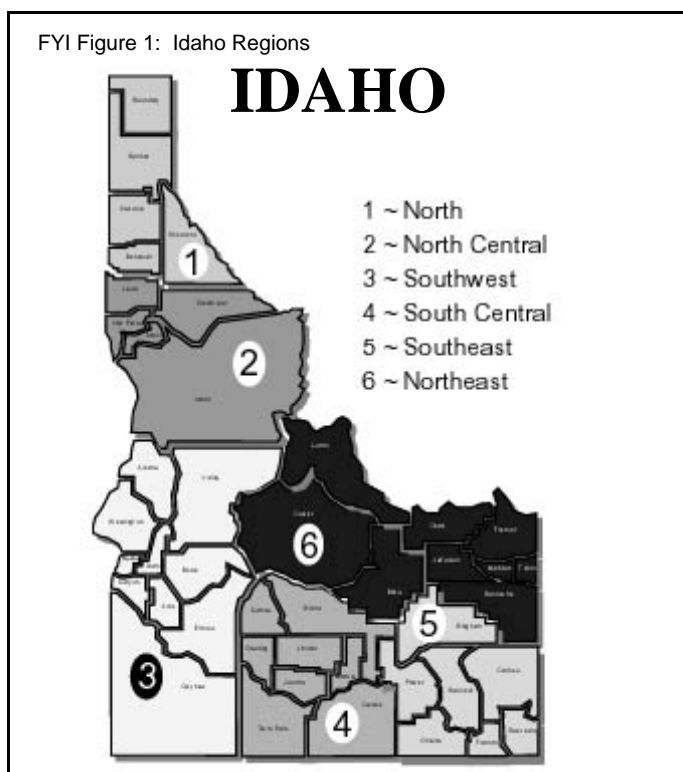
beans, potatoes, beef cattle, and all milk. Prices were lower for barley and wheat. Year-over-year price comparisons show that this year's prices for alfalfa hay, dry beans, potatoes, and wheat are down considerably from last year while the price of beef cattle rose from \$58.70 cwt to \$77.80. The price for all milk rose from \$10.90 cwt to \$13.00 cwt.

Agricultural producers will not only be following price developments, but also tracking meteorological developments in order to gauge next year's water conditions, especially for irrigation and hydroelectric power. Nineteen counties were included in Drought Emergency Declarations issued in 2003 by the Idaho Department of Water Resources and approved by Governor Kempthorne. Eighteen counties were included in declarations in 2002. These counties are located within the Snake River system, including other major tributary river systems, in southern Idaho.

Southern Idaho's water supply system, which includes a huge underground aquifer that feeds into the Snake River in the Twin Falls area, is almost totally dependent upon the winter snow pack in the mountains mostly within the state's borders. An extensive dam and lake outflow infrastructure captures the spring runoff for storage. There are competing interests for this water: irrigation throughout the growing season; hydroelectric power generation throughout the year; salmon and steelhead fish migration (both to and from the Pacific Ocean) in the spring and fall; recreation during the summer; and a conducive habitat for fish and animals throughout the year. Of course, Idaho's growing population needs this water for drinking and domestic uses, and some manufacturers also use large quantities of water for production.

Given this dependency on a very unpredictable snow pack, it is important the water storage system retains carryover water from one year to the next and the Snake River aquifer is recharged. As Idaho enters the winter months this year, there is very little water in storage. Some of the upstream reservoirs are at half capacity, but all are at less than the average amount for this time of the year. Some of the large, downstream reservoirs are down to 10-20 percent capacity with a couple at 1.0 to 2.0 percent full. Needless to say, a bountiful snow pack is needed.

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State Table 2: Nonfarm Payroll Jobs

% Change From

BY PLACE OF WORK	Sept 2003*	Aug 2003	Sept 2002	Last Month	Last Year
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**	585,900	578,800	579,000	1.2	1.2
GOODS-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES	107,900	107,300	109,200	0.6	-1.2
Natural Resources & Mining	3,600	3,700	4,300	-2.7	-16.3
Logging	1,900	1,900	2,400	0.0	-20.8
Mining	1,700	1,800	1,900	-5.6	-10.5
Metal Ore Mining	500	500	500	0.0	0.0
Construction	40,900	41,200	39,400	-0.7	3.8
Manufacturing	63,400	62,400	65,500	1.6	-3.2
Durable Goods	39,000	38,400	40,600	1.6	-3.9
Wood Product Manufacturing	7,400	7,400	7,700	0.0	-3.9
Sawmills & Wood Preservation	2,900	3,000	3,200	-3.3	-9.4
Veneer & Engineered Products	1,400	1,400	1,300	0.0	7.7
Other Wood Product Manufacturing	3,100	3,000	3,200	3.3	-3.1
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	3,700	3,700	3,700	0.0	0.0
Machinery Manufacturing	2,600	2,700	2,900	-3.7	-10.3
Computer & Electronic Product Manufacturing	16,000	16,000	17,800	0.0	-10.1
Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	2,300	2,300	2,200	0.0	4.5
Other Durable Goods	7,000	6,300	6,300	11.1	11.1
Nondurable Goods	24,400	24,000	24,900	1.7	-2.0
Food Manufacturing	16,400	15,900	16,800	3.1	-2.4
Fruits & Vegetable Preserving & Specialty	8,500	8,300	8,800	2.4	-3.4
Paper Manufacturing	1,600	1,700	1,700	-5.9	-5.9
Printing & Related Support Activities	2,000	2,100	2,000	-4.8	0.0
Chemical Manufacturing	1,800	1,800	1,900	0.0	-5.3
Other Nondurable Goods	2,600	2,500	2,500	4.0	4.0
SERVICE-PROVIDING INDUSTRIES	478,000	471,500	469,800	1.4	1.7
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	119,100	118,100	116,800	0.8	2.0
Trade	99,700	99,100	97,800	0.6	1.9
Wholesale Trade	25,300	24,900	25,000	1.6	1.2
Wholesalers, Durable Goods	11,700	11,700	11,700	0.0	0.0
Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	11,400	11,000	11,500	3.6	-0.9
Retail Trade	74,400	74,200	72,800	0.3	2.2
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	11,000	10,800	10,800	1.9	1.9
Building Material and Garden Equipment	8,300	8,400	7,900	-1.2	5.1
Food & Beverage Stores	12,700	12,600	12,800	0.8	-0.8
General Merchandise Stores	15,700	15,600	14,600	0.6	7.5
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	19,400	19,000	19,000	2.1	2.1
Utilities	1,900	1,900	1,900	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	17,500	17,100	17,100	2.3	2.3
Rail Transportation	1,300	1,300	1,300	0.0	0.0
Truck Transportation	8,800	8,600	8,300	2.3	6.0
Information	9,300	9,300	9,000	0.0	3.3
Telecommunications	3,300	3,200	3,200	3.1	3.1
Financial Activities	27,600	27,700	26,000	-0.4	6.2
Finance & Insurance	20,500	20,500	19,400	0.0	5.7
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	7,100	7,200	6,600	-1.4	7.6
Professional & Business Services	75,800	75,200	71,100	0.8	6.6
Professional, Scientific, & Technical	29,500	29,500	28,300	0.0	4.2
Scientific Research & Development	7,500	7,400	7,300	1.4	2.7
Management of Companies & Enterprises	8,800	8,800	8,500	0.0	3.5
Administrative & Support & Waste Management	37,500	36,900	34,300	1.6	9.3
Administrative & Support Services	36,400	35,800	33,200	1.7	9.6
Educational & Health Services	61,700	60,000	60,400	2.8	2.2
Educational Services	6,800	5,100	6,300	33.3	7.9
Health Care & Social Assistance	54,900	54,900	54,100	0.0	1.5
Hospitals	13,300	13,400	13,400	-0.7	-0.7
Leisure & Hospitality	56,900	58,400	56,400	-2.6	0.9
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	9,000	9,500	8,100	-5.3	11.1
Accommodation & Food Services	47,900	48,900	48,300	-2.0	-0.8
Accommodation	7,300	8,000	8,200	-8.8	-11.0
Food Services & Drinking Places	40,600	40,900	40,100	-0.7	1.2
Other Services	19,000	18,600	18,000	2.2	5.6
Total Government	108,600	104,200	112,100	4.2	-3.1
Federal Government	15,000	15,400	14,500	-2.6	3.4
State & Local Government	93,600	88,800	97,600	5.4	-4.1
State Government	27,600	26,300	28,600	4.9	-3.5
State Government Education	12,300	11,000	13,000	11.8	-5.4
State Government Administration	15,300	15,300	15,600	0.0	-1.9
Local Government	66,000	62,500	69,000	5.6	-4.3
Local Government Education	33,200	29,500	35,000	12.5	-5.1
Local Government Administration	29,800	30,000	31,300	-0.7	-4.8
Local Government Tribes	3,000	3,000	2,700	0.0	11.1

*Preliminary Estimate

** Estimates include all full or part time wage and salary workers who worked or received pay in the following industry groups during the pay period ending nearest the 12th of the month.

State Table 3: Economic Indicators

	Sept 2003	Aug 2003	Sept 2002	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
IDAHO LABOR FORCE ⁽¹⁾					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	686,200	685,400	686,500	0.1	0.0
Unemployment	37,500	38,600	37,500	-2.8	0.0
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	5.5	5.6	5.5		
Total Employment	648,700	646,800	649,000	0.3	0.0
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	689,000	694,600	690,400	-0.8	-0.2
Unemployment	31,300	34,600	31,400	-9.5	-0.3
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	4.5	5.0	4.5		
Total Employment	657,700	660,000	659,000	-0.3	-0.2
U. S. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE ⁽²⁾	6.1	6.1	5.7		
U.S. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX ⁽²⁾					
Urban Wage Earners & Clerical Workers (CPI-W)	181.0	180.3	177	0.4	2.3
All Urban Consumer (CPI-U)	185.2	184.6	181	0.3	2.3
AGRICULTURE					
Agriculture Employment	46,160	45,640	40,940	1.1	12.8
Operators	9,010	9,010	9,010	0.0	0.0
Unpaid Family	360	360	680	0.0	-47.1
Hired Workers	36,790	36,270	31,250	1.4	17.7
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE					
<i>Claims Activities</i>					
Initial Claims ⁽³⁾	9,131	9,020	7,805	1.2	17.0
Weeks Claimed ⁽⁴⁾	73,772	71,443	69,238	3.3	6.5
<i>Benefit Payment Activities⁽⁵⁾</i>					
Weeks Compensated	62,036	59,892	48,445	3.6	28.1
Total Benefit \$ Paid	\$13,578,814	\$13,029,087	\$10,528,463	4.2	29.0
Average Weekly Benefit Amount	\$218.89	\$217.54	\$217.33	0.6	0.7
Covered Employers	41,435	41,393	40,406	0.1	2.5
Total Benefit \$ Paid During Last 12 Months ⁽⁴⁾	\$218,967,404	\$215,917,052	\$209,566,466	1.4	4.5

(1) Preliminary Estimate

(2) Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

(3) Includes all entitlements/programs on Intrastate and Interstate Agent, New, and Additional Claims

(4) Includes all entitlements/programs, Intrastate and Interstate Agent

(5) Includes all entitlements/programs, Total Liabilities



PANHANDLE

BENEWAH, BONNER, BOUNDARY, KOOTENAI, & SHOSHONE COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

September brought warm, clear weather that attracted tourists and kept loggers, Forest Service workers, and construction workers busy. A surge in students boosted employment at private and public schools, including North Idaho College. An improved outlook for manufacturing and retail also helped push the Panhandle's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate down from 8.4 percent in August to 8.0 percent in September. Detailed information about changes in employed and unemployed residents and in payroll jobs by industry is shown in Panhandle Table 1. Each county's section in the *Area Developments* section below describes how that county has fared in recent months.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Benewah County

- Benewah County missed most of the effects of the U.S. economic slowdown since late 2000, partly because it did not enjoy the strong economic boom of the 1990s. In the last few months, the rise in lumber and plywood prices has benefited the Panhandle's most timber-dependent county. Continued growth of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe's headquarters and enterprises also helped push down the county's unemployment rate. Benewah County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate, which normally hovers above 10 percent, edged down to 8.5 percent by September 2003.
- Fairway Golf and Grill opened in late September at the St. Maries Golf Course. The \$230,000 remodel of the clubhouse included the construction of a new kitchen and the addition of a deck for outside dining.

Bonner County

- Many communities in the U.S. would envy Bonner County's seeming obliviousness to the U.S. eco-

Panhandle Table 1: Labor Force & Employment

	Sept 2003*	Aug 2003	Sept 2002	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	93,030	93,390	93,550	-0.4	-0.6
Unemployed	7,430	7,800	8,010	-4.7	-7.2
% of Labor Force Unemployed	8.0	8.4	8.6		
Total Employment	85,600	85,590	85,540	0.0	0.1
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	93,090	94,670	93,240	-1.7	-0.2
Unemployed	5,590	5,660	5,970	-1.2	-6.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	6.0	6.0	6.4		
Total Employment	87,500	89,010	87,270	-1.7	0.3
JOB BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	72,190	71,640	71,280	0.8	1.3
Goods-Producing Industries	13,820	13,620	13,800	1.5	0.1
Natural Resources & Mining	1,590	1,620	1,700	-1.9	-6.5
Construction	5,310	5,200	5,120	2.1	3.7
Manufacturing	6,920	6,800	6,980	1.8	-0.9
Wood Product Manufacturing	2,800	2,680	2,960	4.5	-5.4
Other Manufacturing	4,120	4,120	4,020	0.0	2.5
Service-Providing Industries	58,370	58,020	57,480	0.6	1.5
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	13,740	13,550	13,430	1.4	2.3
Wholesale Trade	1,440	1,420	1,390	1.4	3.6
Retail Trade	10,530	10,410	10,360	1.2	1.6
Utilities	400	400	380	0.0	5.3
Transportation & Warehousing	1,370	1,320	1,300	3.8	5.4
Information	1,070	1,060	1,260	0.9	-15.1
Financial Activities	3,030	3,000	2,910	1.0	4.1
Professional & Business Services	6,660	6,730	7,270	-1.0	-8.4
Educational & Health Services	6,960	6,840	6,770	1.8	2.8
Leisure & Hospitality	10,290	10,150	9,750	1.4	5.5
Other Services	2,480	2,520	2,390	-1.6	3.8
Government Education	4,000	4,110	3,800	-2.7	5.3
Government Administration	8,800	8,820	8,750	-0.2	0.6
Government Tribes	1,340	1,240	1,150	8.1	16.5

* Preliminary estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

conomic slowdown. While U.S. manufacturing jobs fell 15.4 percent between September 2000 and September 2003, Bonner County manufacturing jobs rose 15.7 percent from 1,590 to an estimated 1,840 jobs. The growth of Litehouse Dressing, Unicep Packaging, Diedrich Manufacturing, and Packer Aircraft were responsible for most of the additional manufacturing jobs. During the last year, mail-order giant Coldwater Creek has held employment steady around 370, while construction and related industries have been strong. Tourism, led by Schweitzer Mountain Resort, also enjoyed growth. While the U.S. seasonally adjusted unemployment rate rose from 4.0 percent in September 2000 to 6.1 percent in September 2003, Bonner County's rate fell from 9.6 percent to 8.1 percent.

Boundary County

- This year has proven to be a painful one for Boundary County. On September 19, the Louisiana-Pacific (L-P) mill in Bonners Ferry closed, putting about 140 people out of work. The L-P mill in Moyie Springs was sold to Riley Creek, who took over operations in September; the new company did not hire several of the former L-P mill workers. Because unemployment statistics are for the week containing the 12th of the month, the September seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 8.6 percent does not reflect the mill closure. The October unemployment rate is expected to exceed 10 percent. Fortunately, the county's other major employers appear to be stable. They include Rocky Mountain Academy and other CEDU programs for youth, the Kootenai River Inn & Casino and other Kootenai Tribe operations, Anheuser-Busch's Elk Mountain hops farm, the U.S. border operations, and the ornamental tree nurseries and Christmas tree farms. Bonners Ferry Job Service is helping former mill workers make transitions into new jobs or training programs. When dislocated workers make a positive transition into the workforce, it benefits not only their families, but also the entire community.
- Boundary County School District broke ground for a new 91,000-square-foot high school in Bonners Ferry in early October. It's the district's first major construction project since the current high school was built in 1969. Walker Construction of Spokane is the main contractor on the \$9.5 million project. The new high school, which will be 25,000-square feet larger than the current high school and wired for today's computer and communications technologies, is slated for completion by August 2004. Then the existing high school will be remodeled to replace the current Boundary County Junior High School.
- Tee Craft, a gift shop, recently opened on Bonner Street in Bonners Ferry. Owned by Richards Craft and his son Aaron, the shop can imprint custom graphics on everything from jewelry boxes to furniture to t-shirts. It can create portraits, decorative landscapes, or new versions of family photos.

Kootenai County

- Several events in the past year helped Kootenai County add about 600 more jobs than it lost between September 2000 and September 2003, including growth in schools and services because of continued population growth, development of the health care sector led by Kootenai Medical Center, strong residential construction, expansion in tourism because of new entertainment venues at the Coeur d'Alene Tribal Casino and Silverwood Theme Park, and the opening and expansion of two Center

Partners call centers. Kootenai County was not fast enough, however, to keep up with population growth or to make up for the loss of jobs by Kootenai County residents who had worked in Spokane County. The net result was a marginal unemployment increase from 8.0 percent in September 2000 to 8.3 percent in September 2003. The unemployment rate is likely to increase slightly by the end of the year because of the upcoming layoffs mentioned in the next two paragraphs.

- Center Partners has been cutting jobs this year and will eliminate at least another 175 jobs by the end of the year. Center Partners opened its first Kootenai County call center at 1200 Ironwood in Coeur d'Alene in March 2001. Its employment rose quickly. After it opened a call center at Riverbend Commerce Park in Post Falls in January 2002, Center Partner employed more than 1,100 people. Both centers exclusively served one customer—AT&T Broadband. After Comcast acquired AT&T Broadband in early 2002, it began to take customer service jobs in house rather than outsourcing them. With Center Partners losing contracts with its major customer, it began downsizing. Today, Center Partners employs about 700 people. After Center Partners closes its Coeur d'Alene center November 30, it will continue to employ more than 400 people at its Post Falls center.
- In early October, Stimson Lumber gave a 60 days notice to 67 Atlas mill workers that they will be permanently laid off on December 5. Stimson cited the depressed market for pine board as the major reason for eliminating the night shift at its Atlas mill. Following the layoff, Stimson will shift most of its production from pine to cedar boards. Employment at the Atlas mill in Coeur d'Alene will fall from 161 to 94. After the layoff, Stimson will continue to employ more than 400 people in the Panhandle, including at its mill in Priest River, and at the DeArmond and Atlas mills in Coeur d'Alene. The 67 workers affected by the December 5 layoff already are receiving assistance from Coeur d'Alene Job Service.
- The Panhandle's first Costco store is under construction on Neider Avenue between Government Way and Fourth Street in Coeur d'Alene. The \$10 million, 147,000-square-foot warehouse store will employ about 225 people when it opens in early spring.

Shoshone County

- In the last three years, Shoshone County endured the fourth in a series of major job losses in mining. In September 2000, Shoshone County's mining in-

Continued on page 22



SEAPORT

NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO: CLEARWATER, IDAHO, LATAH, LEWIS, & NEZ PERCE COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Seaport's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased in September to 5.0 percent from August's rate of 4.8 percent, as shown in Seaport Table 1. In September 2002, the rate was 4.9 percent. Month-over-month, total employment increased slightly, even though the unemployment rate increased, because unemployment increased at a faster rate. The slight increase was unusual as employment usually decreases in September because of a break between hiring seasons for recreation/agriculture and the winter hiring season for the holidays. In September, *Seaport's Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 180 from August 2003, but decreased 960 from September 2002. September's increase month-over-month was due to normal seasonal fluctuation in *Government Education*. *Education* increases in September because of the return of school staffs to classrooms after the summer break.

SPECIAL TOPIC:

Unemployment Insurance

Stabilizing the Economy: Besides helping unemployed individuals and families transition from one job to another, unemployment insurance (UI) acts as an automatic economic stabilizer. In a recession, UI benefits offset some of the effects of job losses on a community's spending power. UI benefits assist individuals and their families in continuing to meet their needs and pay their bills. As a result, UI benefits also help maintain the spending power of the landlords, stores, banks, and other busi-

Seaport Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Nez Perce County, Idaho and Asotin County, Washington

	Sept 2003*	Aug 2003	Sept 2002	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	35,810	35,700	34,580	0.3	3.6
Unemployment	1,780	1,720	1,710	3.5	4.1
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.0	4.8	4.9		
Total Employment	34,030	33,980	32,870	0.1	3.5
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	35,230	35,390	34,110	-0.5	3.3
Unemployment	1,350	1,450	1,310	-6.9	3.1
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.8	4.1	3.8		
Total Employment	33,880	33,940	32,800	-0.2	3.3
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	26,300	26,120	27,260	0.7	-3.5
Goods-Producing Industries	4,410	4,370	4,760	0.9	-7.4
Natural Resources & Mining	180	200	230	-10.0	-21.7
Construction	1,020	1,000	1,200	2.0	-15.0
Manufacturing	3,210	3,170	3,330	1.3	-3.6
Wood Product Manufacturing	550	550	610	0.0	-9.8
Food Manufacturing	110	90	110	22.2	0.0
Paper Manufacturing	1,220	1,220	1,260	0.0	-3.2
Other Manufacturing	1,330	1,310	1,350	1.5	-1.5
Service-Providing Industries	21,890	21,750	22,500	0.6	-2.7
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	5,570	5,610	5,480	-0.7	1.6
Wholesale Trade	630	650	650	-3.1	-3.1
Retail Trade	3,630	3,660	3,530	-0.8	2.8
Utilities	90	90	90	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	1,220	1,210	1,210	0.8	0.8
Information	360	370	360	-2.7	0.0
Financial Activities	1,690	1,610	1,810	5.0	-6.6
Professional & Business Services	1,370	1,380	1,590	-0.7	-13.8
Education & Health Services	3,780	3,770	3,740	0.3	1.1
Leisure & Hospitality	2,610	2,600	2,730	0.4	-4.4
Other Services	1,090	1,160	1,140	-6.0	-4.4
Government Education	1,970	1,820	2,060	8.2	-4.4
Government Administration	2,580	2,560	2,690	0.8	-4.1
Government Tribes	870	870	900	0.0	-3.3

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

Seaport Table 2: Amount of Unemployment Insurance Payments in North Central Idaho

COUNTY	Number of Weeks Paid			Dollar Amount Paid		
	State Fiscal Year		#	State Fiscal Year		#
	2003	2002	Change	2003	2002	Change
Clearwater	9,758	11,606	-1,848	\$2,301,314	\$2,749,029	-\$447,715
Idaho	13,757	12,074	1,683	\$3,068,135	\$2,675,680	\$392,455
Latah	12,578	10,595	1,983	\$2,978,774	\$2,477,910	\$500,864
Lewis	1,033	2,075	-1,042	\$210,411	\$443,709	-\$233,298
Nez Perce	19,087	19,340	-253	\$4,105,997	\$4,220,433	-\$114,436
Total North Central Idaho	56,213	55,690	523	12,664,631	12,566,761	\$97,870

nesses that provide products and services to those individuals and families. UI benefits soften the blow to family finances that losing a job entails and reduces the effect that job losses can have on the economy of a community.

Retaining a Local Workforce: UI promotes stability by making it possible for employers to retain workers during the off-season or a short downturn. Many seasonal industries would find it much more difficult to attract and retain employees if their workers could not rely on UI benefits to help support them through the off-season.

In North Central Idaho, \$12,664,631 was paid out in UI benefits for the fiscal year ending June 2003, up \$97,870 from 2002. For a breakdown of dollars paid and numbers of weeks paid in the region, see Seaport Table 2 on page 9.

SPECIAL TOPIC: Washington State Minimum Wage

The Washington State minimum wage will increase 15 cents—to \$7.16 an hour—on January 1, 2004. Washington's minimum wage is recalculated each year in September because of a 1998 voter-approved initiative that mandates an annual cost-of-living adjustment. The adjustment is made based on changes in the U.S. Consumer Price Index for urban wage earners and clerical workers. For the 12 months ending August 2003, the index increased 2.1 percent over August 2002. That prompted a 2.6 percent increase in the current \$7.01 per hour minimum wage. Washington State now has the highest minimum wage in the country. The minimum wage in Washington State applies to workers in both agricultural and nonagricultural jobs. Workers younger than 16 years of age may be paid 85 percent of the adult minimum wage. North Central Idaho employers, especially those in Lewiston and Moscow, keep a close eye on the minimum wage in the state of Washington. Increases in the minimum wage in Washington usually signal a need to increase entry level wages in North Central Idaho border communities because employers compete for the same labor pool. The Idaho and federal minimum wage is \$5.15 an hour. There are no January 1, 2004, increases planned for either Idaho or the United States.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS Clearwater County

- The City of Orofino and Clearwater County officially opened the Orofino Business Center in October. The construction cost of the new building was \$2,647,000. One funding source for the project included \$1.5 million from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, but the dollars were not guaranteed until Orofino was awarded a \$55,000

Rural Community Development Block Grant through the help of Idaho Governor Dirk Kempthorne. Overall funding included \$1.5 million from the state of Idaho, \$468,000 from the City of Orofino, and \$179,500 from ASE, Inc. who will be the anchor tenant. "We are proud that ASE is in Orofino and of the employment base they have established," Kempthorne said at the dedication ceremony. "As you continue to grow and prosper, may this always be your base." Seismic Tech will be the other business in the new business center.

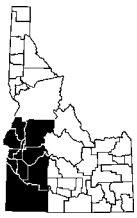
Idaho and Lewis Counties

- Economic development efforts in Riggins received a boost in October with the announcement that the community had been awarded a \$47,000 Rural Business Opportunity Grant. The funds will be used for economic diversification and small business expansion projects. The projects must assist or add value to existing businesses or create new business opportunities. These grants are part of the Bush Administration's overall efforts to help spur economic growth opportunities and improve the quality of life for rural Americans.
- Joint School District (JSD) 241 (Grangeville, Riggins, and Elk City) received a federal collaborative Teaching American History grant of \$889,649. The grant is one of only 114 Teaching American History grants awarded in 38 different states. The purpose of the grant is to promote the teaching of traditional American history in elementary and secondary schools as a separate academic subject. Collaborating agencies that will help with instructor education include the Lewis County Historical Society/Craigmont Chapter, Idaho County Historical Society, Bicentennial Historical Museum, Grangeville Centennial Library, Historical Museum at St. Gertrude, Lewis-Clark State College, and the University of Idaho. "We look forward to both an educational experience and a fun approach to enhancing the history experiences for our kids in the community," explained JSD 241 superintendent Wayne Davis. "We plan to focus on the history rich area we are blessed to live in."

Latah County

- The University of Idaho has re-started an extensive renovation project to the University Classroom Center (UCC) and will rename the building UI Teaching and Learning Center. Improvements will include a cyber cafe, a 32-station computer lab, a new heating and ventilation system, a new roof, and enclosed hallways. The university expected to renovate the building in the spring of 2002, but state budget cuts

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TREASURE VALLEY

ADA, ADAMS, BOISE, CANYON, ELMORE, GEM, OWYHEE, PAYETTE, VALLEY, & WASHINGTON COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The Boise City Metropolitan Statistical Area's (MSA) average annual unemployment rate for September 2003 was 5.3 percent, as shown in Treasure Valley Table 1. This was two-tenths of a percentage point below the August 2003 rate of 5.5 percent and two-tenths of a percentage point above the September 2002 rate of 5.1 percent. Month-over-month, the number of employed persons increased by 1,200, or 0.5 percent, from August 2003, and the number of unemployed individuals decreased by 400 individuals, or 3.0 percent. The increasing number of persons employed and the decreasing number of persons unemployed created an overall increase of 800 individuals, or 0.3 percent, in the *Civilian Labor Force*, from August 2003. Year-over-year, the number of employed persons decreased by 6,500, or 2.7 percent, and the number of unemployed individuals increased by 300 individuals or 2.3 percent, creating a net decrease in the *Civilian Labor Force* of 6,200 individuals, or 2.5 percent, in the *Civilian Labor Force* from September 2002. The *Civilian Labor Force* figures for September 2003 for all ten counties in Southwest Idaho are shown in Treasure Valley Table 2.

Treasure Valley Table 2: September 2003 Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Figures for Southwest Idaho Counties				
	Civilian Labor Force	Number Unem- ployed	Percent Unem- ployed	Number Employed
Ada	176,412	8,088	4.6	168,324
Adams	1,876	250	13.3	1,626
Boise	2,682	194	7.2	2,488
Canyon	69,678	5,054	7.3	64,625
Elmore	9,786	675	6.9	9,112
Gem	6,202	467	7.5	5,735
Owyhee	4,234	103	2.4	4,131
Payette	9,509	1,100	11.6	8,409
Valley	4,000	322	8.1	3,678
Washington	4,137	487	11.8	3,651
Statewide	686,282	37,389	5.4	648,893

Treasure Valley Table 1: Boise MSA Labor Force & Employment
Ada and Canyon Counties

	Sept 2003*	Aug 2003	Sept 2002	% Change Last Month	% Change Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	244,800	244,000	251,000	0.3	-2.5
Unemployment	13,100	13,500	12,800	-3.0	2.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.3	5.5	5.1		
Total Employment	231,700	230,500	238,200	0.5	-2.7
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	242,500	245,200	249,000	-1.1	-2.6
Unemployment	11,800	12,500	11,600	-5.6	1.7
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.9	5.1	4.7		
Total Employment	230,700	232,700	237,400	-0.9	-2.8
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**	230,300	228,500	230,700	0.8	-0.2
GOODS-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES					
Natural Resources & Construction	16,000	16,100	16,400	-0.6	-2.4
Manufacturing	30,400	30,100	31,700	1.0	-4.1
Durable Goods	23,300	23,100	24,700	0.9	-5.7
Wood Product Manufacturing	1,900	2,000	1,900	-5.0	0.0
Fabricated Metal Products Mfg.	1,500	1,500	1,500	0.0	0.0
Machinery Manufacturing	1,200	1,300	1,400	-7.7	-14.3
Computer & Electronic Manufacturing	14,400	14,400	16,100	0.0	-10.6
Transportation Equipment Mfg.	1,600	1,600	1,700	0.0	-5.9
Other Durable Goods	2,700	2,300	2,100	17.4	28.6
Nondurable Goods	7,100	7,000	7,000	1.4	1.4
Food Manufacturing	5,200	5,200	5,200	0.0	0.0
Printing & Related Support Activities	700	700	800	0.0	-12.5
Other Nondurable Goods	1,200	1,100	1,000	9.1	20.0
SERVICE-PROVIDING INDUSTRIES					
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	45,300	44,900	44,900	0.9	0.9
Trade	38,100	37,900	37,900	0.5	0.5
Wholesale Trade	10,700	10,600	10,400	0.9	2.9
Wholesalers, Durable Goods	6,600	6,600	6,400	0.0	3.1
Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	2,800	2,800	3,100	0.0	-9.7
Retail Trade	27,400	27,300	27,500	0.4	-0.4
Food & Beverage Stores	4,200	4,100	4,400	2.4	-4.5
General Merchandise Stores	5,900	5,900	5,900	0.0	0.0
All Other Retail Trade	17,300	17,300	17,200	0.0	0.6
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	7,200	7,000	7,000	2.9	2.9
Utilities	700	700	700	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	6,500	6,300	6,300	3.2	3.2
Information	3,700	3,700	3,600	0.0	2.8
Telecommunications	1,400	1,400	1,300	0.0	7.7
Financial Activities	12,300	12,300	12,100	0.0	1.7
Finance & Insurance	9,300	9,300	9,000	0.0	3.3
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	3,000	3,000	3,100	0.0	-3.2
Professional & Business Services	33,500	33,400	32,100	0.3	4.4
Professional, Scientific, & Technical	9,400	9,400	10,200	0.0	-7.8
Management of Companies & Ent.	6,900	7,000	6,700	-1.4	3.0
Administrative & Support & Waste Mgmt.	17,200	17,000	15,200	1.2	13.2
Educational & Health Services	27,600	27,700	26,900	-0.4	2.6
Educational Services	1,900	1,900	1,900	0.0	0.0
Health Care & Social Assistance	25,700	25,800	25,000	-0.4	2.8
Hospitals	9,000	9,200	8,900	-2.2	1.1
Leisure & Hospitality	19,900	20,100	20,500	-1.0	-2.9
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	2,900	3,000	2,700	-3.3	7.4
Accommodation & Food Services	17,000	17,100	17,800	-0.6	-4.5
Accommodation	2,000	2,000	2,100	0.0	-4.8
Food Services & Drinking Places	15,000	15,100	15,700	-0.7	-4.5
Other Services	6,700	6,700	6,700	0.0	0.0
Total Government	34,900	33,500	35,800	4.2	-2.5
Federal Government	5,500	5,600	5,400	-1.8	1.9
State & Local Government	29,400	27,900	30,400	5.4	-3.3
State Government	13,400	12,600	13,900	6.3	-3.6
State Government Education	3,900	3,200	4,300	21.9	-9.3
State Government Administration	9,500	9,400	9,600	1.1	-1.0
Local Government	16,000	15,300	16,500	4.6	-3.0
Local Government Education	9,000	8,300	9,500	8.4	-5.3
Local Government Administration	7,000	7,000	7,000	0.0	0.0

* Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

In the Boise City MSA *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 1,800, or 0.8 percent, from August 2003 to September 2003, while year-over-year, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* lost 400 jobs, or 0.2 percent, in the Boise City MSA. Month-over-month *Goods-Producing Industries* gained 200 jobs; job gains were noted in *Other Durable Goods Manufacturing* (400 jobs), and *Other Nondurable Goods Manufacturing* (100 jobs), while job decreases were noted in *Natural Resources, Mining, & Construction* (-100 jobs), *Wood Product Manufacturing* (-100 jobs), and *Machinery Manufacturing* (-100 jobs). Year-over-year, *Goods-Producing Industries* lost 1,700 jobs, occurring in *Natural Resources, Mining, & Construction* (-400 jobs), *Machinery Manufacturing* (-200 jobs), *Computer & Electronic Product Manufacturing* (-1,700 jobs), *Transportation Equipment Manufacturing* (-100 jobs), and *Printing and Related Supports Activities* (-100 jobs). The only industries to experience job gains were *Other Durable Goods Manufacturing* (600 jobs) and *Other Nondurable Goods Manufacturing* (200).

In *Service-Providing Industries*, jobs gained outweighed jobs lost in the Boise City MSA by 1,600 from August 2003 to September 2003. Gains were experienced in *Food and Beverage Stores* (100 jobs), *Transportation & Warehousing Services* (200 jobs), *Administrative & Support & Waste Management Services* (200 jobs), *State Government Education* (700 jobs), *State Government Administration* (100 jobs), and *Local Government Education* (700 jobs). Job losses occurred in *Management of Companies & Enterprises* (-100 jobs), *Health Care & Social Assistance Services* (-100 jobs) including *Hospitals* (-200 jobs), *Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation Services* (-100 jobs), *Food Services & Drinking Places* (-100 jobs), and *Federal Government* (-100 jobs). Year-over-year, *Service-Providing Industries* gained 1,300 jobs. Gains were noted in *Durable Goods Wholesale Trade* (200 jobs), *All Other Retail Trade* (100 jobs), *Transportation & Warehousing Services* (200 jobs), *Information Services* (100 jobs) including *Telecommunications Services* (100 jobs), *Finance & Insurance Services* (300 jobs), *Management of Companies & Enterprises* (200 jobs), *Administrative & Support & Waste Management Services* (2,000 jobs), *Health Care & Social Assistance Services* (700 jobs) including *Hospitals* (100 jobs), *Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation Services* (200 jobs), and *Federal Government* (100 jobs). Job losses were noted in *Nondurable Goods Wholesale Trade* (-300 jobs), *Food and Beverage Stores* (-200 jobs), *Real Estate & Rental & Leasing Services* (-100 jobs), *Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services* (-800 jobs), *Accommodation Services* (-100 jobs), *Food Services & Drinking Places* (-700 jobs), *State Government Education* (-400 jobs), *State Government Administration* (-100 jobs), and *Local Government Education* (-500 jobs). The

slow growth of jobs over the year is consistent with the downturn and slow recovery that the national economy has been experiencing since January 2001.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Boise City MSA

- Washington Group International (WGI) was awarded a \$110 million contract by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for reconstruction in Iraq. The contract allows WGI to help repair Iraq's electrical infrastructure. WGI will install two 80-megawatt electrical generators, rehabilitate three existing generators, and reconstruct a series of 400-kilovolt electrical transmission lines.
- ProClarity recently announced that it purchased the rights of the distribution and sales of its products in the United Kingdom (UK) from Intelligent-Apps Holdings Limited. ProClarity currently has more than 120 corporate customers in the UK, including Harrod's, Siemens Standard Drives, Scottish & Newcastle Retail, and Reuters. Purchasing the distribution and sales rights allows ProClarity to have direct relationships with customers and shows that the company anticipates growth in that area.
- Albertsons Inc. laid off an undisclosed number of employees at its Boise headquarters in early October. The company cited an "ultra-competitive" environment in addition to the need to lower costs, as reason for the layoffs.
- Wells Fargo & Co. announced in October that it would sell the former First Security Building on the south side of Idaho Street between 9th and 10th Streets in downtown Boise to Tomlinson & Associates, Inc. Wells Fargo plans to consolidate all of its downtown banking and administrative operations at the Wells Fargo Center at the corner of Ninth and Main Streets. Tomlinson & Associates, Inc. plans to renovate the building for retail and office space.
- The construction of an 11-story building containing a Hampton Inn & Suites Hotel has been announced as part of the ongoing redevelopment of the 8th Street Marketplace in downtown Boise. According to the plans, a 168-room Hampton Inn will occupy the fifth through eleventh floors of a building located at the corner of Capitol Boulevard and Myrtle Street. Other plans for the site include construction of a parking garage, retail establishments, a 10-screen theater, and office space. Completion of the hotel and parking garage construction is expected in late 2004.

- Amalgamated Sugar Company announced plans in early October to move its headquarters from Ogden, Utah, to Boise over the next few years. Company officials plan to bring the corporate offices closer to Amalgamated owners, production plants, and suppliers. The Boise headquarters will minimize travel between factories. The company expects that about 20 people will be employed at the Boise site in a year and the remaining staff will come the next year. Amalgamated Corporate offices currently employ about 50 people.
- TenXsys, a Boise engineering firm, recently won a \$600,000 two-year NASA contract to develop software that would allow complex data, such as that received from a space shuttle or the international space station, to be read on laptops and PDAs.
- KeyLabs, a Utah technology firm, recently opened a facility in Boise. The Boise facility will conduct product testing, certification assurance programs, and stress testing of e-commerce sites and high-traffic websites. The office is located on Explorer Drive in West Boise.
- A new Hampton Inn & Suites opened near the Idaho Center in Nampa in mid-September. The four-story facility has 101 rooms and 4,000-square feet of conference space. The hotel held a grand opening celebration in mid-October.
- Nampa School District voters approved a \$39 million school bond in mid-October. The bond will fund a new high school and two new elementary schools in Nampa. Construction of the new high school and elementary schools will start in April 2004 and May 2004, respectively. The new schools are expected to open in fall 2005.
- Vallivue School District trustees unanimously approved two new charter schools for the district in mid-October. Thomas Jefferson Charter School will serve students in grades kindergarten through seventh with class sizes between 25 and 33 students. It will open in fall 2004 with about 250 students. Highmark Charter School will serve students in grades kindergarten through fourth grade with class sizes between 25 and 30 students. It will open in fall 2004 with about 135 students.
- Neon Plaza, located on the Nampa-Caldwell Boulevard near Lowe's in Nampa, has announced tenants for the facility including Primo's Pizza Buffet, Quizno's, Coldstone Creamery, and Fantastik Sams. Completion of the building is expected in mid-December. Neon Plaza is being built on the former Neon Drive-In site.
- Recent business openings in the Boise City MSA include: Mai Thai Restaurant and Boogie Woogie's on Idaho Street in downtown Boise, Bead Dreams on Emerald in Boise, Chinese Acupuncture and Natural Therapy Center on Cole Road in Boise, a Cold Clean office on Contractors Street in Boise, an Arctic Circle eatery on Five Mile in West Boise, Booster Juice in the Crossroads Shopping Center in Meridian, Dancing Dog Coffee House on Franklin Road in Meridian, Bella Fina, an upscale furnishings store, in Meridian, Krispy Kreme's first Idaho donut shop on the corner of Eagle and Fairview in Meridian, Big 5 Sporting Goods in Karcher Mall in Nampa in early November, and Golden Dragon Chinese Buffet on 21st Avenue in Caldwell. In other business: Home Depot announced it would start building in Nampa, bringing more than \$6 million into the local economy with the construction of the new store; the Melting Pot will open at the corner of Idaho and 6th Street in downtown Boise in spring 2004; Chapala closed its downtown Boise eatery; The Mona Lisa plans to open a fondue restaurant in downtown Boise near the end of 2003; Advanced Business Communications relocated to Orchard Street in Boise; Paper Express moved to a new facility in the Westgate Shopping Center in Boise; PetSmart announced plans to open a store in the Crossroads Shopping Center in Meridian; Bodily RV started construction on a new RV Super Center at the corner of Linder and Overland in Meridian; Tony Roma announced plans to open a restaurant in Meridian within the next year; The Winery at Eagle Knoll held its grand opening in October at its location on Highway 16 near Eagle; CableOne started construction on a new building in Nampa; Bodybuilding.com announced plans to open a new store in the ShopKo Plaza on Caldwell Boulevard in Nampa; Book Nook Plus reopened after its remodel and expansion in Nampa; Victor's reopened in the Edmark Plaza in Caldwell; and the Simplot family donated \$1 million toward Caldwell's planned YMCA.

Adams County

- A new real estate agency, Country Properties, recently opened in Council. The business is located at 601 Dartmouth, across from Jerry's Auto Parts. The business currently has listings ranging from Midvale to Fruitvale and is expecting to eventually cover everything between Midvale and New Meadows. The company website, www.idahocountryproperties.net, is now available. The

business is open Monday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

- A to Z Bargains recently opened in the Carter Building in Council. The retail store offers a wide selection of import and salvage merchandise as well as discounts groceries. The business is owned by Kevin McDaid and Deana Bair and is open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Elmore County

- Idaho Power announced recently that a 160-megawatt gas turbine power plant would be built in Mountain Home's industrial park located north of The Pilot truck stop. Idaho Power entered into a development contract with Mountain View Power, Inc. of Boise to construct the facility. The \$61 million facility will employ about 75 people during the construction of the facility; three to four people will be permanently employed to run the plant. Once construction starts, the plant will be completed in about eight months.
- Elmore Medical Center has begun reviewing and developing plans for the relocation of its air ambulance-landing site. The \$45,000 to \$50,000 project would include a 45-square-foot concrete pad with special lighting and fencing, as well as a walkway to the helipad. The project is scheduled for completion in 2003.

Gem County

- Walter Knox Memorial Hospital recently started an expansion project. Some of the construction will be on the main entrance, so the temporary entrance is located at the east side emergency doors. Once the remodeling/expansion project is completed, the lab and radiology departments will be larger, the post-surgery and recovery rooms will be remodeled, the dietary area will be smaller, and a business office and medical records area will be added. The remodeling/expansion project is scheduled for completion by July 2004.

Payette County

- Busy Bee Espresso recently opened in Fruitland. The business is located at 1229 Southwest 16th Street. It is open 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday. Busy Bee Espresso is owned and operated by Curtis and Marjorie Cockerum.
- Snake River Veterinary in Fruitland held its official ribbon cutting ceremony in late October 24. The business recently moved from Payette to its

current location at 401 Whitley Drive in Fruitland. Doctors Brent Varriale and Wayne Ashton own and operate the veterinary clinic.

- Old West Dollar Store and More recently opened in Payette. The store is located at 1244 16th Street and is owned by George and Mica Wilson. The store stocks the typical dollar store inventory including balloons, cards, tools, toys, health products, beauty products, medicines, and baby products, as well as seasonal selections.

Valley County

- The McCall Center for Dance recently opened at 1016 North Third Street in downtown McCall. The McCall School of Ballet joined with Studio Bee to offer ballet, jazz, hip-hop, and tap lessons at the facility.
- A-1 Heating & Air Conditioning recently opened an office in McCall. The office is located on Commerce Street near Lumberman's lumberyard and the McCall airport. The office serves the entire McCall area including New Meadows, Riggins, and Cascade.

Washington County

- Weiser voters recently passed a bond to finance a new multi-purpose facility for Weiser High School. The \$2.8 million bond will finance construction of the multi-purpose facility that will include a classroom/instructional area, gym space for physical education classes and extracurricular activities, a wrestling room, a fitness/conditioning room, storage areas, adequate shower and toilet accommodations, and an indoor walking track that will be available to patrons outside of school hours.
- Dr. Jason Carter recently opened a new dental office located at 39 West Idaho Street in Weiser. Dr. Carter has three employees.

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MAGIC VALLEY

BLAINE, CAMAS, CASSIA, GOODING, JEROME, LINCOLN, MINIDOKA, & TWIN FALLS COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the Magic Valley Labor Market Area (LMA) was 4.3 percent for September 2003 as shown in Magic Valley Table 1. This is four-tenths of a percentage point higher than August 2003 and five-tenths of a percentage point higher than September 2002. Year-over-year, the number of workers unemployed increased by 460 or 22.5 percent. The *Civilian Labor Force* increased by 4,610 workers to 53,820.

Overall, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 2,330, or 5.7 percent, year-over-year. This was one of the highest increases in *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* in the state. The sectors that had the largest increases were *Professional & Business Services* and *Educational & Health Services* at 22.6 and 24.6, respectively. This has been the trend for the last several months. This is not surprising because the largest portion of *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* are in these sectors, which continue to grow as the Magic Valley LMA's economy also continues growing at a strong rate. A couple areas of interest are *Retail Trade* and *Wholesale Trade* with increases of 2.9 and 3.0, respectively. These sectors had been showing sluggish growth or even declines in the early part of 2003, but the addition of Best Buy and Sportsmen's Warehouse on the canyon rim area have stimulated both *Retail Trade* and *Wholesale Trade*. Sectors that had major declines were *Natural Resources & Mining*, *Utilities*, and *Government Education*. *Natural Resources & Mining* jobs in the Magic Valley LMA are devoted almost entirely to rock crushing and extraction, and new machinery has caused a reduction in the already small number of workers in this sector. The drop in the number of *Utilities* jobs is due to consolidation and streamlining of service providers in this sector.

Once again, the Magic Valley economy continues to perform amazingly well compared to other areas, but adverse economic events have had a measurable effect. The closure of the Moore North American plant in Jerome County, a busi-

Magic Valley Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Twin Falls, Jerome, and Gooding Counties

	Sept 2003*	Aug 2003	Sept 2002	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	53,820	53,930	49,210	-0.2	9.4
Unemployment	2,290	2,090	1,870	9.6	22.5
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.3	3.9	3.8		
Total Employment	51,530	51,840	47,340	-0.6	8.9
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	54,900	55,260	50,400	-0.7	8.9
Unemployment	1,880	2,190	1,550	-14.2	21.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.4	4.0	3.1		
Total Employment	53,020	53,070	48,850	-0.1	8.5
JOB BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**	43,250	42,830	40,920	1.0	5.7
Goods-Providing Industries	8,130	7,960	7,920	2.1	2.7
Natural Resources & Mining	20	20	30	0.0	-33.3
Construction	2,350	2,300	2,170	2.2	8.3
Manufacturing	5,760	5,630	5,730	2.3	0.5
Food Manufacturing	3,820	4,120	3,820	-7.3	0.0
Other Manufacturing	1,930	1,510	1,910	27.8	1.0
Service-Providing Industries	35,120	34,780	33,000	1.0	6.4
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	10,170	10,170	9,870	0.0	3.0
Wholesale Trade	1,900	1,810	1,830	5.0	3.8
Retail Trade	5,960	6,030	5,790	-1.2	2.9
Utilities	160	190	210	-15.8	-23.8
Transportation & Warehousing	2,150	2,150	2,040	0.0	5.4
Information	500	500	490	0.0	2.0
Financial Activities	1,760	1,750	1,670	0.6	5.4
Professional & Business Services	6,460	6,280	5,270	2.9	22.6
Educational & Health Services	3,800	3,730	3,050	1.9	24.6
Leisure & Hospitality	3,700	3,470	3,580	6.6	3.4
Other Services	1,520	1,410	1,450	7.8	4.8
Government Education	3,090	3,570	3,500	-13.4	-11.7
Government Administration	4,120	4,000	4,120	3.0	0.0

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

ness forms and other paper products company, has strongly impacted unemployment there. Jerome County's unemployment rate increased one full percentage point since last year, almost totally attributable to the Moore closure. However, the excellent business diversity that has evolved in the Magic Valley LMA has helped stabilize unemployment by providing a wider range of job options to the dislocated workers. The City of Twin Falls has already broken the 2002 record year for new housing permits. As a result of this and business expansions, the number of jobs in the *Construction* sector are up 8.3 percent from last year. The outlook for *Construction* continues to be excellent for the early part of 2004 thanks to many new housing permits.

The Blaine County economy has remained stable through 2003 with construction projects once again keeping unemployment low. The summer tourist season was below normal due to drought conditions and high fire danger. Many campgrounds were either closed or had restrictions against

campfires and this reduced the number of tourists in the area. Summer and autumn events, such as Western Days and The Trailing of the Sheep, were well attended. While unemployment rates in the Blaine County area were higher than in the previous year, rates were still low in comparison to other areas of the state.

The Mini-Cassia economy continues to show stress from the adverse impact of the J.R. Simplot Company closure in Heyburn and the indefinite layoff of over 100 employees at McCain Foods. Unemployment rates remain higher than statewide and national averages. The complete closure of Simplot on November 1, 2003, displaced an additional 225 people. A small work crew of 22 people will be displaced in about a month. This will cause an increase of the unemployment rates in the area to 8.5-10.0 percent by the first part of 2004. However, the recent addition of 35 workers at Kraft Foods and the announcement that Coast to Coast Carports, Inc. is building a plant in Heyburn and hiring 20-50 workers may help to stop the downward spiral. It is expected that the unemployment rates in the area will top out in early 2004 and slowly decrease as the effects of the new jobs and possible nationwide economic recovery take hold. Such news has stimulated an air of optimism and holiday hiring is expected to be a little better than expected as retailers have indicated they are rethinking their holiday hiring strategies for 2003.

The Magic Valley LMA economy continues to be stable and one of the best performers in the state. Recent new retail openings and overall optimism have caused retailers to indicate they will hire more holiday workers this year compared to last year. A strong surge in beef prices has helped cattle ranchers immensely since the demand for beef has increased in the United States for the first time in many years. The state of agriculture largely depends on how much snowfall is received this water season. Strong housing starts in Twin Falls makes the outlook for new home construction good in 2004. The announcement that Hydro-Fitting Manufacturing Corporation is locating its business in Twin Falls and will hire 37 works has improved the outlook for light manufacturing jobs in 2004.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

- Hydro Fitting Manufacturing Corp. announced that it would be relocating its entire business from Covina, California, to Twin Falls. The company will build a new, ergonomically designed 30,000-square-foot building in Twin Falls and hopes to begin operations by July 2004. It plans to hire 37 local workers with wages ranging from \$8.00 to \$15.00 per hour. There will be building maintenance and parts deburring jobs, and lathe and mill operator positions. The highest paid occupation will be skilled workers who will program computer-guided machines. The company will offer medical and dental benefits to its workers after three months on the job. Hydro Fittings Manufacturing has applied for a Workforce Develop-

ment Training Fund Grant and plans to partner with the College of Southern Idaho (CSI) to train workers.

Blaine, Camas, Jerome, and Lincoln Counties

- Governor Dirk Kempthorne attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony for Rocky Mountain Hardware in Shoshone October 31. The company built a new 20,000-square-foot facility (replacing a former building?). Ten new jobs have been created by this new facility in Shoshone that now employs 25 workers. The company received a \$141,500 development grant to finance infrastructure costs. Over 100 people attended the ribbon cutting.

Cassia and Minidoka Counties

- Coast to Coast Carports, Inc. announced that it will be locating a new production facility in Heyburn and will hire 20-50 new workers. Coast to Coast is a subsidiary of TNT Carports, Inc. of Mt. Airy, North Carolina, with facilities in Arkansas and Texas. The announcement was the culmination of a fast-moving economic development arrangement that transpired within only three days. The company had originally considered locating to Jerome, but that city was not able to meet the company's real estate needs. The lead was turned over to the Southern Idaho Economic Development Organization, which then contacted members of the Mini-Cassia Economic Development Commission, and the deal was completed. Coast to Coast will apply for a Workforce Development Training Fund Grant and will partner with CSI for training. There will be a cross-spectrum of jobs ranging from office workers to assemblers and welders.
- Kraft Foods in Rupert announced that it will be adding a new product line and hiring an additional 35 workers. Governor Dirk Kempthorne announced that a \$105,000 Workforce Development Training Fund Grant was awarded to the company to assist in training the new workers.
- The J.R. Simplot Company in Heyburn closed permanently in November displacing approximately 225 more workers; nearly 600 workers have been displaced since the plant first announced it was closing. A 22-person work crew will remain for about another month to finish cleaning and dismantling some equipment. The plant was built in 1960 and has run continuously since it opened. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the company employed up to 900 people. The company has not indicated what it intends to do with the property.

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SOUTHEAST IDAHO

BANNOCK, BEAR LAKE, BINGHAM, CARIBOU, FRANKLIN, ONEIDA, & POWER COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

In September 2003, the Pocatello Metropolitan Statistical Area's (MSA) seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell three-tenths of a percentage point to 5.2 percent from the August 2003 revised rate of 5.5 percent. The return of Idaho State University students to the area for school and improved economic conditions, which prompted individuals not previously in the labor force to seek jobs, drove the *Civilian Labor Force* numbers up by 1,530 to 41,560 in September. The number of individuals unemployed dropped by 40 to 2,180 and contributed to the unemployment rate reduction.

Improved economic conditions in 2003 over 2002 drove the MSA's unemployment rate down six-tenths of a percentage point from the September 2002 rate of 5.8 percent.

The Pocatello MSA's September 2003 unemployment rate was below the state and U.S. unemployment rates at 5.5 percent and 6.1 percent, respectively.

The addition of 2,020 *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* in September 2003 over August 2003 was driven by education as the new school year started. *Government Education* added 1,630 jobs: 1,100 in *State Education* (Idaho State University) and 530 in *Local Education* (local school districts). Other notable increases occurred in *Leisure and Hospitality* (200) and *Government Administration* (180). Eighty additional jobs in *Accommodations* and 120 jobs in *Food Services & Drinking Places* were likely the result of increased activity over the Labor Day Holiday and the return of Idaho State University students to the area. Especially nice weather during September required the continuation of parks and recreation services and street maintenance projects, which contributed to the increases.

Year-over-year, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 950. Gains occurred in the *Service-Providing Industries* (990) while the *Goods-Producing Industries* lost 40

Southeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Pocatello City MSA (Bannock County)

	Sept 2003*	Aug 2003	Sept 2002	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	41,560	40,030	40,210	3.8	3.4
Unemployment	2,180	2,220	2,330	-1.8	-6.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.2	5.5	5.8		
Total Employment	39,380	37,810	37,880	4.2	4.0
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	41,050	39,310	40,040	4.4	2.5
Unemployment	1,900	2,130	2,050	-10.8	-7.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.6	5.4	5.1		
Total Employment	39,150	37,180	37,990	5.3	3.1
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	34,220	32,200	33,270	6.3	2.9
<i>Goods-Producing Industries</i>	4,360	4,380	4,400	-0.5	-0.9
Natural Resources & Mining	10	10	10	0.0	0.0
Construction	1,820	1,820	1,750	0.0	4.0
Manufacturing	2,530	2,550	2,640	-0.8	-4.2
Food Manufacturing	450	470	460	-4.3	-2.2
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	110	110	120	0.0	-8.3
Machinery Manufacturing	30	30	40	0.0	-25.0
Other Manufacturing	1,940	1,940	2,020	0.0	-4.0
<i>Service-Providing Industries</i>	29,860	27,820	28,870	7.3	3.4
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	6,640	6,650	6,660	-0.2	-0.3
Wholesale Trade	990	980	1,050	1.0	-5.7
Retail Trade	4,380	4,410	4,350	-0.7	0.7
Utilities	50	50	50	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	1,220	1,210	1,210	0.8	0.8
Information	690	690	690	0.0	0.0
Financial Activities	1,760	1,780	1,800	-1.1	-2.2
Professional & Business Services	3,570	3,420	3,220	4.4	10.9
Educational & Health Services	2,820	2,840	3,070	-0.7	-8.1
Leisure & Hospitality	3,460	3,260	3,420	6.1	1.2
Other Services	1,240	1,290	1,200	-3.9	3.3
Government Education	5,350	3,720	5,150	43.8	3.9
Government Administration	4,340	4,160	3,670	4.3	18.3

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

jobs. *Professional and Business Services* gained 350 jobs over the year, mostly because of increased call center and harvest activity. The number of *Manufacturing* jobs remained below last year's level as AMI Semiconductor reduced and continues to adjust staff, and Ballard-Kimberly Clark eliminated jobs through attrition. If companies that have announced job growth continue to add jobs through the end of the year, the area should experience a net gain of jobs in 2003 over 2002.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Please note: Information contained in *Area Developments* is obtained from area newspapers, local Job Service offices, trade publications, local area Chambers of Commerce publications, and other sources.

Bannock County

- Qwest Communications International Inc. announced plans to increase its Pocatello workforce by 102 workers by March 2004. In a press conference in September, Qwest president for Idaho, Jim Schmit, credited Pocatello's excellent workforce and Idaho's business-friendly climate for the decision to bring these jobs to Pocatello. Governor Dirk Kempthorne attended the press conference and lauded Qwest Communications as one of Idaho's premier employers. The local Qwest office competed with offices in several states and cities for the expansion. After the 102 new workers are added, Qwest will employ 268 people in Pocatello with individual salaries between \$22,000 and \$40,000 per year.
- Idaho State University (ISU) announced the expansion of its Idaho Accelerator Center. The \$1.8 million expansion is the result of a partnership between public entities and private business. The expansion includes two additional accelerator labs and support facilities. Completion of the expansion is expected in the spring of 2004 and should add 20 to 30 jobs. Governor Dirk Kempthorne, who attended a ceremony at ISU in early October, praised the partnerships of government, education, and private industry in making positive things happen in Pocatello. ISU, the City of Pocatello, and private industry have combined resources to bring this expansion to the university and the city.
- Quiznos Sandwich Shop opened September 30 on the corner of South Fifth Avenue and Center Street in Pocatello. The new business employs approximately 25 people.

Bingham County

- Gerald and Carrye Wilmot opened an auto repair shop, G&C Auto, at 500 West Highway 26 in Blackfoot. The couple operates the business together and offers everything from tune-ups to engine exchanges. Gerald Wilmot is a certified Master Automotive Technician and has many years of experience. Carrye is a certified bookkeeper.
- Blackfoot's 20th Century Ford-Dodge is undergoing a major upgrade. The two-phase project will include improving both the interior and exterior of the business, changing the businesses entrance, and remodeling the sales offices. The upgrade will improve the appearance and functionality of the business.

Caribou County

- Approximately \$130,000 in improvements is underway at Caribou Memorial Hospital in Soda Springs. The registration and human resource areas are being upgraded to increase privacy and efficiency. The space vacated by human resources will be used to expand the existing health information services divi-

sion. The project also includes new flooring and wall covering. Funding for the \$130,000 improvement came from federal "upper payment limit" funds through the Idaho Hospital Association.

- Agrium Inc. of Soda Springs announced the reduction of approximately 45 jobs at its Astaris Purified Phosphorus Acid (PPA) plant. The PPA facility, a joint venture of Agrium Inc. and Astaris LLC, opened in 2001. The facility is operated by Agrium and supplied PPA to the company's plant in Green River, Wyoming, and was to supply PPA to replace elemental phosphorus at the Astaris facility in Pocatello. Astaris' Pocatello facility closed in December 2002; the Green River facility will also close.

Franklin County

- Gordon's Steak House opened at 101 North State in Preston. The restaurant, owned by Gordon Brewster and Mundo Velpeuda, is open seven days a week and employs 15 workers. According to Brewster, work began in June 2003 to renovate and bring the building into the 21st century. After a successful renovation, the restaurant opened September 1. The restaurant is the second restaurant operated by the partners.

Oneida County

- Anderson Feed held a grand opening celebration at its new store in Malad. Owners Shawn and Brenda Anderson have operated the business in Samaria for the past four years. The business is located at 35 West 90 South in Malad, and carries a full line of Intermountain Farmer and Nutrena products as well as other feed and tack.

Power County

- The old county hospital and American Legion building at 500 Pocatello Avenue in American Falls is being remodeled and upgraded to house the new American Falls Youth Center and county museum. Upgrades to the electrical wiring and ventilation in the building's basement, which will house the youth center, is complete. Remodeling has progressed to the point of painting and installation of floor coverings. The new youth center will include a snack bar area, computer and study area, pool tables, a ping-pong table, outdoor basketball hoops, and other accessories. The center remodel and operation is funded through a partnership of government, religious organizations, and private business. Completion is expected by early 2004.

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NORTHEAST IDAHO

BONNEVILLE, BUTTE, CLARK, CUSTER, FREMONT, JEFFERSON, LEMHI, MADISON, & TETON COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

September's seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate of 3.3 percent for the Bonneville Labor Market Area (LMA) decreased two-tenths of a percentage point from the previous month, but increased one-tenth of a percentage point from the same time last year as seen in Northeast Table 1. Individually, the counties showed little change over the month; all showed slight decreases in the unemployment rate with Butte County remaining unchanged. Year-over-year, Bingham and Butte Counties showed larger increases at six-tenths of a percentage point and eight-tenths of a percentage point, respectively. Idaho Falls, the largest city in the LMA, decreased one-tenth of a percentage point from the previous month and decreased two-tenths of a percentage point from the same time last year to end with an unemployment rate of 3.2 percent.

Nonfarm Payroll Jobs in the LMA increased by only 80 jobs over the month. Although *Goods-Producing Industries* decreased 480 jobs, due to *Construction* and *Manufacturing* decreases, *Service-Providing Industries* showed an increase of 560 jobs. Increases in both *Government Education* (610 jobs) and *Government Administration* (290 jobs) counteracted decreases in *Information*, *Trade*, *Professional & Business Services*, and *Other Services*. The increases in government jobs are a result of the start of a new school year and needed cleanup of city properties at the end of tourist season. Year-over-year, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 770, with larger increases seen in *Construction* (1,080 jobs) and *Educational & Health Services* (370 jobs). Larger decreases were noted in *Food Manufacturing* (-390 jobs) as processing plants laid off for maintenance, and *Retail Trade* (-360 jobs) during a time of garden and crop

Northeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Bonneville, Bingham, Butte, and Jefferson Counties

	Sept 2003*	Aug 2003	Sept 2002	% Change From Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	81,060	80,640	81,960	0.5	-1.1
Unemployment	2,690	2,840	2,640	-5.3	1.9
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.3	3.5	3.2		
Total Employment	78,370	77,810	79,320	0.7	-1.2
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	82,430	83,130	83,550	-0.8	-1.3
Unemployment	2,740	3,550	2,820	-22.8	-2.8
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.3	4.3	3.4		
Total Employment	79,690	79,580	80,730	0.1	-1.3
JOB BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	65,040	64,960	64,270	0.1	1.2
<i>Goods-Producing Industries</i>	11,180	11,660	10,320	-4.1	8.3
Natural Resources & Mining	70	70	80	0.0	-12.5
Construction	6,160	6,300	5,080	-2.2	21.3
Manufacturing	4,950	5,290	5,160	-6.4	-4.1
Food Manufacturing	2,370	2,330	2,760	1.7	-14.1
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	320	320	270	0.0	18.5
Machinery Manufacturing	490	480	460	2.1	6.5
Other Manufacturing	1,770	2,160	1,670	-18.1	6.0
<i>Service-Providing Industries</i>	53,860	53,300	53,950	1.1	-0.2
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	14,230	14,230	14,500	0.0	-1.9
Wholesale Trade	4,720	4,730	4,770	-0.2	-1.0
Retail Trade	7,520	7,550	7,880	-0.4	-4.6
Utilities	110	110	100	0.0	10.0
Transportation	1,880	1,840	1,750	2.2	7.4
Information	790	810	900	-2.5	-12.2
Financial Activities	2,050	2,060	2,090	-0.5	-1.9
Professional & Business Services	11,780	11,890	11,770	-0.9	0.1
Educational & Health Services	6,500	6,480	6,130	0.3	6.0
Leisure & Hospitality	5,320	5,410	5,210	-1.7	2.1
Other Services	2,090	2,220	2,280	-5.9	-8.3
Government Education	4,580	3,970	4,640	15.4	-1.3
Government Administration	6,520	6,230	6,430	4.7	1.4

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

harvesting when there is an abundance of food sold or produced out of the retail market.

SPECIAL TOPIC:

Overview of LMA Labor Force Figures

Data for the Bonneville LMA since 1998 indicates the labor force has grown by almost 3,000 as shown in Northeast Table 2 on page 20. Since 2003 only includes data through October, a 10-month average (January through October) is used for each of the six years to make the data comparable to the most recent 2003 data. Although the first 10 months of 2003 shows a 337-person decrease from 2002, it shows a lower unemployment rate than any of the previous years. Therefore, the number of

Year	Avg Labor Force	Avg Unemp Rate
1998	79,979	4.1
1999	80,019	4.2
2000	79,801	3.8
2001	80,128	3.8
2002	83,168	3.9
2003	82,831	3.7

unemployed persons in 2003 was less than it was in 2002. Several contributing factors can be noted. The LMA's overall population has increased by almost 6,500 from 1998 to 2002. Out of this growth, Bonneville County contributed close to 68 percent—almost 4,400 people. *Health Services, Construction, and Social Services* have shown steady increases in *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* data for the past several years. A focus on economic development has been increasing in these counties over the past five to six years. Bonneville County remains a regional hub, attracting many surrounding counties in *Retail* and *Services* industries. Commercial growth remains heavy into the Ammon area and in the urban revitalization area between Broadway and Pantheri Drive. The LMA has lost some companies, gained others, and has experienced some large layoffs over the six years, and growth has slowed in many areas. Yet the LMA still shows growth and progression, and the outlook for economy remains optimistic and vibrant.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Bonneville County

- North Wind, Inc. is building a new corporate headquarters north of U.S. Highway 20 and south of Freeman Park in Idaho Falls. The 29,000-square-foot building will house over 100 employees and will allow the company to grow. The company specializes in environmental and earth science consulting and management, and recently started its own construction company due to demand, building on the company employees' expertise. The company started in 1997 and has over 200 employees with 14 offices throughout the U.S. The planned completion date of the building is early summer 2004.
- A new Child Behavior Center recently opened in Ammon at 1619 Curlew Drive. The full-service center for children with developmental, emotional, and behavioral disorders houses 13 spe-

cialists covering a large range of treatments. For more information, call 529-4300.

- Furniture Row, a 34,000-square-foot addition to the Denver Mattress Company now appears as a strip mall on the west side of Hitt Road. Furniture Row is a sister company of Denver Mattress. The addition expanded the one-time bed store into a full-line furniture store. Technically, there are now four stores: Denver Mattress specializes in mattresses; Sofa Mart specializes in sofas, chairs, and loveseats; Bedroom Expressions specializes in bedroom furniture; and Oak Express specializes in dressers, tables, and other woodwork. Each store has a separate outside entrance, but they are also interconnected with walkthroughs.

Jefferson County

- Steel Vision, a company that erects large pre-engineered metal buildings such as airplane hangars and potato cellars, is building on the west side of U.S. Highway 20 in north Rigby. The 6,000-square-foot building will house the company of 80 employees. The company has been renting a building since it opened in 2001. Expected completion is December.

Madison County

- With Brigham Young University-Idaho still growing as it adds more educational options and living/studying spaces for students, the town of Rexburg continues to add businesses to keep up with demand. Utility lines and roads are being completed for a 29-lot business park situated on 18 acres near U.S. Highway 20 near West Main. Professional offices, retail shops and restaurants are expected to locate there over time. Already an insurance office has committed to locating there.
- Teton Village is almost complete at Second East in Rexburg. The \$6.9 million commercial complex includes 12 retail spaces and a six-theater cinema complex. Completion is slated for December.
- Desert Industries Thrift Store is building a \$1.9 million store on Second East in Rexburg next to Teton Lanes bowling alley. The new store will replace the existing store in town.

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LMI WEBSITE STREAMLINES INFORMATION SEARCHES

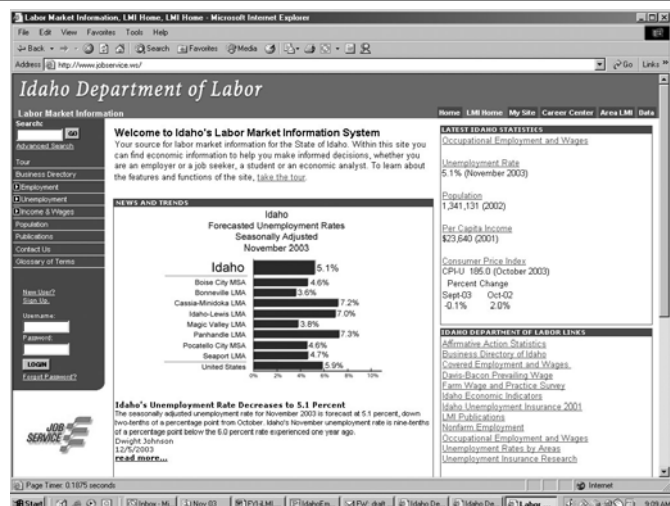
Want to know the population for Burley since 1940? What is the average starting wage of a computer technician in Coeur d'Alene? Which Idaho county currently has the lowest unemployment rate? These and literally thousands of more questions can be answered by a few well-placed clicks of a computer mouse and an Internet connection.

The Idaho Department of Labor's labor market information (LMI) website (www.jobservice.ws), many months in the making, was launched in late summer 2003. This segment of the Department's main website (www.jobservice.us), is also referred to as *iLMI*. It is a comprehensive collection of LMI for the state of Idaho, state regions, counties, and cities, with links to national data and other states' labor agencies.

The LMI found on the website includes data developed by the Idaho Department of Labor's Research and Analysis Bureau in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the U.S. Bureau of the Census, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis. In addition, data from many other sources that would provide information on Idaho's labor market has been included.

So what type of data would that be? Idaho's LMI customers are endless. They include statewide Workforce Investment Boards, economic development professionals from the private and public sectors, job seekers, high school and college students, the state Legislature, career counselors, the media, and all levels of business professionals. To determine how to organize the website and what to include in it was a challenge that continues to be reviewed on a regular basis to make sure the most relevant and recent information is available. On-going formal and informal customer surveys ensure the LMI provided on the website keeps up with demand. The type of information that is most requested and available on the website includes:

- Labor force data – state and county
- Population data – state, county, and city
- Wages by occupation
- Projections - occupation & industry employment – state and region
- Covered employment & wages by industry
- Employee benefit data
- Unemployment Insurance data – weeks compensated and benefits paid for the state, county, and regions
- Income – median, per capita, personal
- Business directory
- Davis Bacon wages



The Idaho Department of Labor's Labor Market Information website home page. It's accessible at www.jobservice.ws.

- Farm labor
- Affirmation action or EEO data – population, labor force, and occupations by race/ethnic and gender
- County economic & unemployment insurance profiles
- Job Service office labor market information

The *iLMI* is a state workforce information delivery system that was designed by a consortium of states. Simple search engines and website links allow users to browse numerous LMI sources. Analysts have developed specific links to LMI by Job Service area, county, and state regions.

The Idaho Department of Labor is committed to continue aggressively pursuing the use of electronic and digital media to more effectively publish and disseminate LMI. In October, the Regional Labor Economists rolled out a series of training classes for all Job Service consultants, supervisors, and managers about the information available on the *iLMI* website and how to use it in assisting the variety of customers they serve. Every attempt has been made to make sure customers can contact someone if they cannot find the information they seek on the website. Names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of contact people who are experts in their field of knowledge are included where appropriate. There is even a general e-mail address that is checked and answered regularly. The *iLMI* website will remain in a continuous improvement mode to meet the needs of all customers.

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put the project on hold. Thirty percent of the university classroom space was lost when the UCC was closed, and an ever-growing student population forced officials to scramble for additional space. Students and faculty were relieved last year when lawmakers passed a bill that allowed Idaho's universities to fund construction projects through the Idaho State Building Authority, an agency that floats bonds for state building projects. The \$12.2 million renovation of the UCC is back on track. The classroom center project at the UI is expected to create 150 jobs and contribute more than \$23 million to the local economy.

Nez Perce and Asotin Counties

- Isothermal Systems Research Inc. (ISR) has landed another large contract from the U.S. military—this one for \$29 million—and there's strong potential for the company to land another like-sized contract in the near future. The Clarkston, Washington-based defense contractor, which opened a sizable office in Liberty Lake last year, signed the contract last month under which it will provide specialized electronics and subassemblies to the Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR). ISR already is working under a similar \$35 million contract awarded by NAVAIR in 2000. Under the new \$29 million contract, ISR will perform research and development of electronic components that are cooled using the company's patented SprayCool technology. The new contract likely will result in additional hiring both in Clarkston and at ISR's Liberty Lake facility. ISR said when

it opened in Liberty Lake last year that it eventually could employ several hundred people.

- The City of Lewiston and the economic development group, Valley Vision, have landed a grant to recruit air travel service to the east. Currently, airline passengers heading east first have to fly west, according to Bob Tippet, executive director of Valley Vision. Regular air service from the Lewiston-Nez Perce County Regional Airport connects to Seattle to the west or Boise to the south. "We want to make sure we have travel; (that) it's easy to get in and out for corporate customers," said Tippet. Bringing in clients or customers from destinations like Salt Lake City and Denver now requires complex routing, he said. The \$675,000 grant through the federal Department of Transportation will be matched by \$75,000 from the City of Lewiston and Valley Vision. The grant money will be used to conduct an analysis of possible service routes and to market the idea to airlines. The majority of the grant—\$600,000—would be used to guarantee the airline that it would not lose money providing the service. Lewiston was one of 35 cities nationwide and the only Idaho city to receive this type of grant money this year.

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Panhandle News — (continued from page 8)

dustry employed 729 people. After the Sunshine Mine closed in early 2002 and the Lucky Friday Mine laid off more than 150 workers, its employment fell to 320 where it has remained since. Although its population base, tourism industry, and employment at the massive auto dealership, Dave Smith Motors, have held steady over the last three years, the retail and service sectors have declined as a result of reduced incomes following the mine layoffs. This summer's closure of the Tele-Servicing Innovations (TSI) call center in Smelterville led to the loss of 80 jobs. So it's not surprising that Shoshone County's unemployment rate rose from 10.1 percent in September 2000 to 12.1 percent in September 2003.

- The Silver Valley Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center at 10 East Station Avenue has two new ten-

ants. The Depot Coffee Shop and Depot Antiques, selling locally made crafts as well as furniture and other antiques on consignment, recently moved into the former train depot in Kellogg. Both tenants expect to benefit from their location on Kellogg's greenbelt where many bicyclists and walkers pass along the former railroad tracks.

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Glossary of Labor Market Terms

Agriculture Employment: Persons on agriculture payrolls who work or receive pay for any period during the survey week. This includes owners, operators, unpaid family members who work at least 15 hours a week, and hired laborers.

Average Hourly Earnings/Average Weekly Hours: The average total money earnings earned by production or non-supervisory workers for selected industries. The average number of hours worked by production or non-supervisory workers including overtime, paid vacation, and sick leave. The data is collected for the week including the 12th of the month.

Average Weekly Earnings: Average Hourly Earnings multiplied by Average Weekly Hours.

Civilian Labor Force: A count of non-institutional persons 16 years of age and over residing within a specific geographic area, excluding members of armed forces, who are classified as employed, unemployed and seeking employment, or involved in a labor dispute.

Consumer Price Index (CPI): A national index measuring changes over time in the price of a fixed market basket of goods and services. There are two indexes—the All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) represents the buying habits of about 80 percent of the non-institutional population of the United States, and the Urban Wage & Clerical Workers (CPI-W) represents 40 percent of the population.

Covered Employers: Employers who are subject to state and federal Unemployment Insurance laws.

Durable Goods: Also known as “hard goods” because they include items manufactured or provided by wholesalers with a normal life expectancy of three years or more.

Employed: Individuals, 16 years of age or older, who worked at least 1 hour for pay or profit or worked at least 15 unpaid hours in a family business during the week including the 12th day of the month. Individuals are also counted as employed if they had a job but did not work because they were: ill, on vacation, in a labor dispute, prevented from working because of bad weather, or temporarily absent for similar reasons.

Initial Claim: Any notice of unemployment filed to request (1) a determination of entitlement to and eligibility for compensation or (2) a second or subsequent period of unemployment within a benefit year or period of eligibility.

Labor Market Area (LMA): An area that consists of a central city or cities and the surrounding territory within commuting distance. It is an economically integrated geographic area within which individuals can reside and find employment without changing place of residence. Idaho has nine LMAs.

Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA): An area that has either a city with a population of at least 50,000 or a Bureau of Census urbanized area of at least 50,000 and a

total metropolitan area of at least 100,000. The Office of Management and Budget designates the MSAs. There are five MSAs in Idaho—Boise City-Nampa MSA (including Ada and Canyon Counties), Coeur d’Alene MSA (Kootenai County), Idaho Falls MSA (Jefferson and Bonneville Counties), Lewiston MSA (Nez Perce County in Idaho and Asotin County in Washington), Logan MSA (Franklin County and the Logan, Utah, Metro Area), and Pocatello City (Bannock County).

Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment: Persons on nonfarm establishment payrolls (including employees on paid sick leave, paid holiday, or paid vacation) who work or receive pay for any part of the week including the 12th of the month. It is a count of jobs by place of work. It does not include self-employed, unpaid volunteer or family workers, domestic workers in households, military personnel and persons who are laid off, on leave without pay, or on strike for the entire reference period.

Nondurable Goods: Also known as “soft goods” because they include items manufactured or provided by wholesalers that generally last for only a short period of time (three years or less).

Seasonally Adjusted: Data is seasonally adjusted to remove the impact of regular events that occur at the same time every year such as the effect of cold weather on outdoor activities, the Christmas holiday, or the summer influx of youth into the labor market.

Unemployed: Those individuals, 16 years of age or older, who do not have a job but are available for work and actively seeking work during the week including the 12th of the month. The only exceptions to these criteria are individuals who are waiting to be recalled from a layoff and individuals waiting to report to a new job within 30 days—these, too, are considered unemployed.

Unemployment Insurance: Unemployment Insurance is a program for the accumulation of funds paid by employers, to be used for the payment of Unemployment Insurance to workers during periods of unemployment which are beyond their control.

Unemployment Rate: The number of persons unemployed expressed as a percentage of the labor force.

Weekly Benefit Amount: The amount payable to a claimant for a compensable week of total unemployment.

Weeks Claimed: The number of weeks that unemployed workers claimed Unemployment Insurance benefits.

Weeks Compensated: The number of weeks for which compensation was actually paid.